



TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Memo To: Board of Selectmen
From: Blythe C. Robinson, Town Manager
Date: January 29, 2016
Re: Town Manager's Weekly Report

Warrants:

- Payroll: \$ 91,024.67
- Expense Warrant: \$ 1,268,988.25

For Your Information/Follow Up:

- Have you seen the updated website??? This project, led by Kelly and Sandy culminated in the new platform going live yesterday. We hope you'll agree that the format is cleaner, more information is available and easier to find, and that it is adaptable to mobile devices. We're also rolling out the paperless meeting agenda for the Selectmen earlier than expected, so that anyone interested in viewing any or all of the Selectmen's agenda packet will be able to do so on-line. We'll talk about that more at the meeting on Tuesday.
- The Governor released his budget proposal for the next fiscal year and as he outlined at the MMA conference last week it includes an increase in local aid revenue for Upton and MURSD. The UGGA grant for the Town goes up \$21,105 to \$511,914, and Chapter 70 aid to the school district will rise \$44,220. There is also small increase in the PILOT monies to Towns with state owned land. The Governor had also announced a further \$75 million for vocational technical schools, but we haven't seen how that will translate for BVT.
- The State also announced an IT Grant program that opens next week for which you must be a Community Compact municipality to be eligible. Grants are available up to \$400,000 to strengthen IT programs and infrastructure. We have two projects in mind that would total about \$37,000 that we will be developing an application for.
- We had a good response to the advertisement for a full-time communication officer. We received nearly 30 applications and the Personnel Board meets on Monday to qualify candidates.
- The Planning Board met this week and discussed the proposed Village Center District By-law. Chris Ryan, the lead planner for the CMPRC was in attendance and reviewed with the Board the draft district map and a first version of the language of the bylaw. The Board debated various aspects of the bylaw, and how to approach asking the voters to approve it at Town Meeting (in stages or all at once). The direction appears to be to focus on the more "commercial" ends of the zone (West Upton and the area from Town

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Kenneth E. Picard, Chairman
James A. Brochu
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Hall to the Gasco Station"). Mr. Ryan will be further refining the document and the Board will discuss it next on February 23rd. If they are satisfied with that, they'll be setting up a public meeting to gather input from interested parties.

- More news on the Personnel Board front we've had two expressions of interest in the opening on the Personnel Board. They've invited those persons to their next meeting so they can see the Board in action and the Board can be ready to give you some input on the appointment process.
- Ken Glowacki and I had a meeting with the Town's financial advisor on Thursday to work on modelling future debt service for the Town should the boards and the voters want to go ahead with some capital projects on the horizon. As you know we will be retiring some debt in the next three years and that may provide the opportunity to take up on other projects. We meet again in two weeks.
- A heads up to all that the warrant for the annual town meeting opens on Monday and articles are accepted through March 16th. We have already received one petition article from a resident seeking to direct the Selectmen to approve a ballot question to hold an override to the tax levy of \$1.4 million.
- We had an incident this week in the Main Hall, one of the women playing basketball in the league missed a step and hit the wall behind the basket. The result was a hole in the wall that needs to be repaired. We've obtained a quote from a firm recently on site completing other repairs to the building from last winter's ice dams. The cost for the repair is \$400 and we will be talking to the league about taking care of that.
- I met with the Northbridge Town Manager this week and discussed the details of sharing a Conservation Agent. They are keen to move forward so I hope to bring to you a draft Inter-municipal Agreement in the next few weeks.